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ABSTRACT

Suitable for grades K-6, the paper presents guidelines for evaluating various levels of writing ability. Also presented are a description of a four-phase writing process model and a list of components necessary for a good writing program. Characteristics of superior, typical, and weak writing are presented on a continuum according to the student's ability to: (1) present ideas with understanding and individuality; (2) show an organization appropriate to the purpose, subject, and audience; (3) demonstrate the ability to use a variety of grammatical sentence patterns; (4) reveal language choices appropriate to the purpose, topic, and audience; and (5) display the conventions of standard written English. The writing process model presents methods and suggestions for developing four phases of writing skills: prewriting skills, drafting skills (writing/composing), skills for editing for form and structure (revising/rewriting), and publishing skills (polishing for mechanics). The final section presents a list of components considered essential to a good writing program, such as creating a supportive classroom climate, using a sensible district-wide model of the writing process, and including writing as an everyday activity in all subject areas. (LH)

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PLEASANT VALLEY K-6 WRITING GUIDELINES

[AND]

A WRITING PROCESS MODEL

by

Richard Hanzelka

Pleasant Valley K-6 Writing Guidelines

The guidelines for superior, typical, and weak writing contained in this folder are an evaluation supplement to Phase Four of the Writing Process Model and the description on the back cover.

WRITING GUIDELINES

	1. The student's writing presents ideas with understanding and individuality.	2. The student's writing shows an organization appropriate to the purpose, subject, and audience.
SUPERIOR	1.1 The student presents ideas completely and establishes contact with the topic. (The student relates personally to the topic.) *The student is likely to:* 1.1.1 Develop ideas by giving specific examples 1.1.2 Express feelings in the writing or attribute feelings to characters 1.1.3 Use writing that sounds like natural speech	2.1 The student relates subject to the purpose so that readers can clearly understand this relationship. *The student is likely to:* 2.1.1 Focus on a central purpose throughout the piece of writing 2.1.2 Use logical progression in the paper from introduction to conclusion with appropriate transitions 2.1.3 Use paragraphs and appropriate transitions effectively and consistently as a means of arranging information
TYPICAL	1.2 The student presents ideas insufficiently and does not adequately establish contact with the topic. (The student deals with the topic somewhat distantly.) *The student is likely to:* 1.2.1 Use accurate information, but little detail about a topic 1.2.2 Lack expression of feelings in the writing generally 1.2.3 Use sentences that lack flow of natural speech	2.2 The student has difficulty in understanding the relationship between subject and purpose. Progress to a logical conclusion is somewhat difficult to discern. *The student is likely to:* 2.2.1 Stray from his/her intended purpose occasionally in the writing 2.2.2 Have a loosely developed organization plan 2.2.3 Use paragraphs which are occasionally, but not always, organized effectively
WEAK	1.3 The student presents fragments of ideas and does not communicate comprehension of the topic. (The student does not establish meaningful contact with the topic.) *The student is likely to:* 1.3.1 Use incomplete or inaccurate information about a topic 1.3.2 Use no statement of feelings in the writing 1.3.3 Use unrelated sentences that lack direction	2.3 The student uses such poor organization that purpose is never revealed to the audience. *The student is likely to:* 2.3.1 Write with no apparent purpose 2.3.2 Fail to use any obvious plan of organization 2.3.3 Exhibit no apparent understanding of paragraphing

3. The student's writing demonstrates the ability to use a variety of grammatical sentence patterns.	4. The student's writing reveals language choices appropriate to the purpose, topic, and audience.
3.1 The student expresses him/herself clearly, with little incidence of grammatical error. *The student is likely to:* 3.1.1 Use t-units longer that the average for his/her grade level * 3.1.2 Use variation in sentence langth 3.1.3 Use a variety of sentence patterns regularly 3.1.4 Use some variation in sentence beginnings 3.1.5 Use correct agreement (subject-verb, tense, pronoun-antecedent) 3.1.6 Use more active than passive verbs 3.1.7 Use a variety of modifiers correctly 3.1.8 Use complete sentences (few fragments)	4.1 The student is skillful with language choice in purposeful writing. *The student is likely to:* 4.1.1 Use expanded vocabulary effectively 4.1.2 Use sentences that are consistent with the stated purpose of topic 4.1.3 Use figurative language effectively
3.2 The student generally writes grammatical sentences *The student is likely to:* 3.2.1 Use t-units that are average for his/her grade level * 3.2.2 Use some variation in sentence length 3.2.3 Use a limited variety of sentence patterns 3.2.4 Use little variation in sentence beginnings 3.2.5 Use correct agreement most of the time (subject-verb, tense, pronoun-antecedent) 3.2.6 Use more passive verbs than is desirable 3.2.7 Use a limited number of modifiers correctly 3.2.8 Use sentence fragments occasionally	4.2 The student shows an awareness of purpose, topic, and audience. *The student is likely to:* 4.2.1 Use typical vocabulary effectively 4.2.2 Use sentences not always related to the stated topic or purpose 4.2.3 Use figurative language infrequently
3.3 The student's writing shows a lack of understanding of relationship between sentence parts. *The student is likely to:* 3.3.1 Use t-units that are somewhat less than the average for his/her grade level * 3.3.2 Use limited variation in sentence length 3.3.3 Use simple sentence structure almost exclusively 3.3.4 Use run-on sentences extensively 3.3.5 Misuse subject-verb, tense, pronoun-antecedent 3.3.6 Use passive voice almost exclusively 3.3.7 Use modifiers inappropriately 3.3.8 Use sentence fragments frequently	4.3 The student has not developed skill in choosing appropriate language. *The student is likely to:* 4.3.1 Use a limited vocabulary 4.3.2 Use sentences that are not related and lack direction 4.3.3 Not use figurative language (use trite or general words)

Average T-Unit Lengths: Grade 3-8.0; Grade 4-8.3; Grade 5-8.8; Grade 6-9.3

5. The student's writing displays the conventions of standard written English (capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc.)

5.1 The meaning of the sentence is readily understood by the reader due to the proper use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

The student is likely to:

5.1.1 Use capitals at the beginning of sentences and with proper nouns

5.1.2 Use correct punctuation

5.1.3 Use correct spelling consistently

5.2 The meaning of most sentences is clear, but there are some errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

The student is likely to:

5.2.1 Use capitals at the beginning of sentences but fail to capitalize some proper nouns

5.2.2 Use correct punctuation most of the time

5.2.3 Misspell a few words

5.3 The meaning of the sentence is not clear due to failure to follow the basic rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

The student is likely to:

5.3.1 Misuse or omit basic capitalization

5.3.2 Use punctuation incorrectly

5.3.3 Use frequent misspelling

A Writing Process Model

by

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The attached model is not definitive in any sense but simply attempts to tie together as many of the various ideas as possible that were presented in Pleasant Valley during 1980-81 by Jim Sabol, Jacque Wuertenberg, Carolyn Copeland and others.

The model is meant to show that at all grade levels (K-6) the act of writing moves back and forth between phases rather than being a sort of compartmentalized activity which moves smoothly from one phase to the next.

In reality, a piece of writing is never "finished" but at some point in its development, the writer may decide it has been worked on enough and either polishes it sufficiently to present to an audience or puts it aside for a while or perhaps forever.

Response to writing during any of the four phases must exhibit respect for the particular window on the world the writer looks through. If the comments of any reader are for some purpose other than helping the writer clarify the view from the window, we may find many of our students deciding to put <u>all</u> writing aside.

<u>PHASE ONE (Prewriting Skills)</u>

Pre-writing usually includes all those experiences a teacher plans for the students before they write as well as those experiences students have had on their own prior to beginning a particular writing activity. The task for the teacher is, first of all, to help release the language the students already possess about an experience. Oral language activities are a critical part of this phase and include listening to stories to use as models for writing, choral reading, creative dramatics, and asking questions of the teacher and of each other related to the pre-writing experience. Brainstorming vocabulary, especially in the form of word caches, is an effective method of raising to a conscious level, words, phrases and sentences about a potential writing topic. Using art as a catalyst is another especially effective pre-writing activity for releasing language and memories about an experience.

In the pre-writing phase comments about structure, paragraphs, correctness, length of the paper and other technical points should be minimized. Too much attention to such matters misses the point of how the process works.

<u>PHASE TWO (Drafting Skills)</u>

Very often (perhaps most of the time in the elementary grades) the pre-writing activities will be done as a group. Then, at some point, the prewriting moves to putting words on paper independently. The focus during this <u>drafting</u> stage is to establish momentum which has been fueled by the prewriting. Some attention will be given to audience and organization at this stage, but the most crucial aspect is continuing the flow of writing---selecting and controlling come later.

The teacher of writing encourages continued drafting by praising particularly good aspects of content; by taking dictation when a student seems slowed down; by asking questions of the student to encourage continued flow and elaboration; and by drawing attention to the word caches and other material generated during prewriting.

One of the crucial aspects of this phase is developing with students the realization that by writing and continuing to press out ideas, new ideas and

PHASE TWO (Drafting Skills) con't
content will be created.

PHASE THREE (Skills of Editing for Form and Structure)

If sufficient material for the writing task has been generated in Phase Two, this third phase will be meaningful; however, if very little has been generated, then there is little point in going this far.

At this stage the writer should have received sufficient praise to know what is good about the writing and sufficient questions about the writing to know what is clear to a reader. The focus of the writer begins to shift from getting the experience down on paper to making the content of the experience clear to an audience. The tasks during this phase include clarifying, combining ideas, making choices to keep or delete ideas, sequencing, selecting a suitable form, clustering material for best effect, and inserting new information.

PHASE FOUR (Publishing Skills)

As the writer reaches a point of having a piece of writing ready for polishing for the teacher or for some wider audience, it is crucial to have the community of writers in the classroom (including the teacher) involved in making suggestions for polishing, especially through the use of proofreading committees made up of students who particularly need help with a skill such as capitalization, punctuation, etc. Classroom style sheets are useful here.

The preparation for presentation may include a careful re-copying of the work by the student or use of the school drop-in writing center to have the work typed and bound.

At times, a student may want to include illustrations, an author page, a table of contents, and/or a response sheet for reader comments.

The process is not static and does not preclude moving from a later phase to an earlier phase to build a stronger or clearer piece of writing. For example, a writer may possibly move from Phase Three back to Phase One either to expand an idea or because the writer finds that only a portion of the original writing suited his/her purpose.

In this model, as in <u>any</u> other description of the writing act, five basics identified by R.D. Walshe in "What's Basic to Teaching Writing?" are crucial:

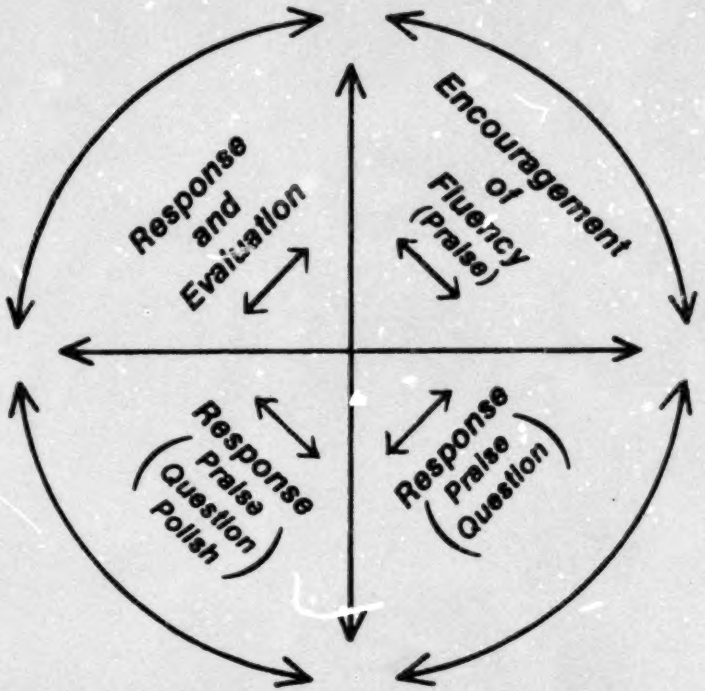
1. The teacher values writing
2. The teacher values the learner writer
3. The teacher encourages pleasure in reading
4. The teacher makes use of insights into the writing process
5. The teacher encourages self-editing

Without these five basics, <u>no</u> writing program will be successful.

A Writing Process Model by Dick Hanzelka

Phase One
PRE—WRITING SKILLS

Experiencing
Choral Reading
Drawing
Pre-creating
Building Word Caches
Creative Drama
Brainstorming
Writing Journals
Questioning



Phase Four
PUBLISHING SKILLS
(Polishing for mechanics)

Correcting (spelling, punctuation, etc.)
Using proofreading committees
Recopying/typing
Using a drop-in writing center
Binding
Writing a page about the author
Writing a table of contents

Phase Two
DRAFTING SKILLS
(or "writing" or "composing")

Building word caches and arrays
Building phrases and statements
Expanding ideas
Asking questions
Working on quantity
Elaborating
Writing in many forms
Dictating
Writing Journals
Creating
"Pressing out"

Phase Three
SKILLS OF EDITING FOR FORM AND STRUCTURE
("revising/rewriting")

Re-creating
Sequencing
Controlling
Clustering
Clarifying for an audience
Combining and recombining
Inserting new information
Shaping
Making choices
Selecting a form
Seeking response

COMPONENTS OF A GOOD WRITING PROGRAM

1. SUPPORT FOR WRITING ACTIVITIES IS OBVIOUS AMONG STAFF, ADMINISTRATION, PARENTS AND BOARD.
2. A SENSIBLE DISTRICT-WIDE MODEL OF THE WRITING PROCESS IS IN PLACE
    A) PRE-WRITING
    B) DRAFTING
    C) EDITING
    D) PUBLISHING
3. A CLASSROOM CLIMATE WHICH LETS WRITING GROW IS PART OF EVERY CLASSROOM.
4. TEACHERS WRITE FOR STUDENTS AND FOR EACH OTHER.
5. WRITING IS USED AS A WAY OF KNOWING--NOT JUST AS A WAY OF TELLING.
6. WRITING IS USED AS A REGULAR, PRIME TIME, EVERYDAY ACTIVITY RATHER THAN AS JUST A ONCE A WEEK "SPECIAL."
7. GRAMMAR STUDY DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR WRITING PRACTICE NOR IS IT A MASTERY PREREQUISITE.
8. MECHANICS OF WRITING ARE LEARNED IN CONTEXT AND ARE DEALT WITH ONLY WHEN THE FINAL DRAFT IS READY FOR AN AUDIENCE.
9. THE INSERVICE BUDGET IS GENEROUS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES IN TEACHING WRITING.
10. WHEN STUDENT WRITING IS GOING TO BE PUBLISHED, OTHER STUDENTS AS WELL AS THE TEACHER BECOME CO-EDITORS FOR EACH OTHER'S WRITING.
11. MANY AUDIENCES OTHER THAN THE TEACHER ARE PROVIDED FOR STUDENT WRITING.
12. TEACHERS PROVIDE TIME FOR WRITING.
13. TEACHERS READ TO STUDENTS DAILY FROM PROFESSIONAL AUTHORS AND FROM STUDENT AUTHORS.
14. WRITING IS EXPECTED BUT NOT ASSIGNED.
15. THE TEACHER'S FIRST RESPONSE IS ALWAYS TO CONTENT.

16. TEACHERS TAKE DICTATION FROM ABLE AS WELL AS LESS ABLE STUDENTS.

17. STUDENTS ARE GIVEN TIME AND ENCOURAGED TO KEEP JOURNALS BEGINNING IN KINDERGARTEN AND CONTINUING THROUGH THE GRADES.

18. THE SEQUENCE FOLLOWED IN WRITING BEGINS WITH THE STUDENTS' WRITING.

19. EVALUATION IS A CONSTANT PART OF WRITING; NOT SOMETHING DONE ONLY AFTER THE FACT OF COMPOSITION.

20. WRITING IS USED IN ALL SUBJECT AREAS AS A WAY TO DEAL WITH CONTENT.

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